

KITTY FREW

by JANE ABBOTT

SYNOPSIS: Miss Lee writes to her, Kitty Frew thinks, although she left him after a quarrel that she is determined to see her. He wants to live on his mother's money. Kitty is working in Stratton's store while Gar helps Marge Crosby stage another theatrical.

Chapter 20

SECURITY TUMBLER
JOSIE noticed her radiance. "You look as if something nice had happened to you, Miss Brandon. Did you have a date with your boy friend last night?"

Kitty shook her head. But she laughed. "Something nice has happened."
Josie was in high spirits herself. "Look at these, Miss Brandon. Aren't they a bargain for the money?" And when Kitty came closer; "Something nice happened to me last night, I met the sweetest man. Gee, I guess it was love at first sight."

Josie's confidences interested Kitty. Josie did not care that Kitty gave no confidences in return. Probably Josie considered she had none to give.

Her friendliness had given Kitty more confidence in her work. Quite consciously she had copied Josie's competent sales manner.

wanted to—most of them don't do that. Why you want to, of course, is your business but it's mine to know that you are in earnest, not just taking a try at it."

Her tone was questioning and Kitty answered:

"I am in earnest, truly."
"Good. I'll tell you what's on my mind but don't say anything about it in the department. They've promised me an assistant—the promise is so old that it has moss on it, but they've got to make good this spring because the department's grown. Can't you see that it's grown even since you've been there, Miss Brandon? Well, if they want to keep me they've got to make good. And they'll listen to any recommendations I make. There's your chance, I'm not saying anything definite, understand; it's up to you."

The waiter had brought their oysters. Miss Lee pounced on them, giving her whole attention to them. Kitty's face had flushed. She ought to tell Miss Lee, now, that she was married, that, any day—Assistant buyer, perhaps some day take Miss Lee's place. To work with Gar to keep their home. Many women did that—one of the girls in the sports-wear department was married. It was the kind of thing Dorcas would do.



"It was love at first sight."

But today she felt a zest that was not borrowed from Josie. It was a busy day. Blouses? She had patience for the most exacting shopper.

A Jersey dress copied from an imported model was the joke of the department, to everyone but Miss Lee, the buyer. It had hung in the case since spring.

"No, I don't want a suit—I want a dress of some kind, something that's a little different," a customer told Kitty, this morning. And Kitty took the Jersey dress out of the case. "It's a Patou copy," she said, as she had said before, but there was a difference in her voice this morning and in the way she smiled over the garment as she held it out. "Don't you want to try it on?"

And ten minutes later the dress went to the bundle counter, sold.

A little later Miss Lee, approaching Kitty in her brisk manner, commended her for her sale. "What time do you go out for lunch, Miss Brandon? Twelve? Change with one of the girls and come with me at one. I've an appointment at the Hoffman at two-thirty and we'll eat there."

At Stratton's Kitty knew Miss Lee as an efficient manager, with a brittle manner that made the girls in her department a little afraid of her. But as they sat down at a small table in the Hoffman dining-room she seemed to soften, grow younger, more animated, as if she threw off a self she kept for business just as she slipped out of her smart coat and let the waiter fold it over the chair back.

"Now, let's see—" Miss Lee suggested one thing and another. "You'll like the Chef's salad. And oysters. Sweetbread patties—that sounds good. Are there mushrooms with them, waiter? Mushrooms—and the pumpkin pie." She put the card down. Immensely satisfied, and looked at Kitty.

Her glance rested on Kitty's face, speculatively. "Do you like your work?"

"Oh, yes, now, I felt stupid at first."
"Well, that's a good sign, that you're willing to admit you were stupid. I've been watching you. You'll get on. In fact I picked you out for good material the first day you came. You worked as if you

Aloud she only answered: "Thanks." In a low tone, a little breathlessly. Miss Lee finished her oysters before she said anything more. Then: "Remember about keeping your mouth shut—and your eyes open. And study your customers, they're as different tastes as they're shapes. Get to know the people who come in. It always makes a hit when you can call some one by name. See that girl getting up from that table over there? That's the Frew girl, Dalton Frew's daughter—"

Kitty turned here eyes swiftly across the room, her face paling with shock. Carol had just risen from a table. She did not leave it at once. She stood there a moment, bent a little toward the man with whom she had been eating. Her face was angry, resentful. To what, ever she was saying the man gave only a shrug of his shoulders, only half rising from his chair. And almost at once Carol turned and left him, walking swiftly out of the room. Kitty saw her lips working.

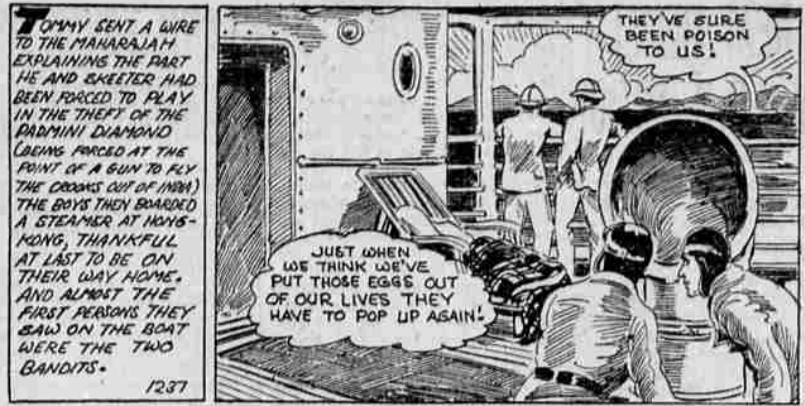
"She's not much on style with all the money she has. But her mother is. Now that's the point I was making—for instance if she should come in, if you'd say: 'Good morning, Miss Frew. Can I help you?' she'd like it. That's Paul Somerset she's just left. He's an actor—starred in Winter's Moon three years ago. I saw him in New York. He had some mix up with the Equity. I heard he was here—the idylers have taken him up. Of course you know what that is—a club of debutantes. They're starting one of those little Theaters. Oh, I keep in touch with what's doing, that's part of my business. If Margery Crosby came in looking for a sweater I'd expect you to show her only the best lot. She's the richest girl in Winton, you know."

Kitty gripped the table to steady herself. The room was whirling about her; she dared not risk a word! Foolishly she had thought Stratton's, like Ketchum Street, a world safely apart from Carol, Margery Crosby, the idylers, and now that security was tumbling about her.

(Copyright, Jane Abbott)

David, however, provides temporary refuge tomorrow when he takes Kitty on an adventure.

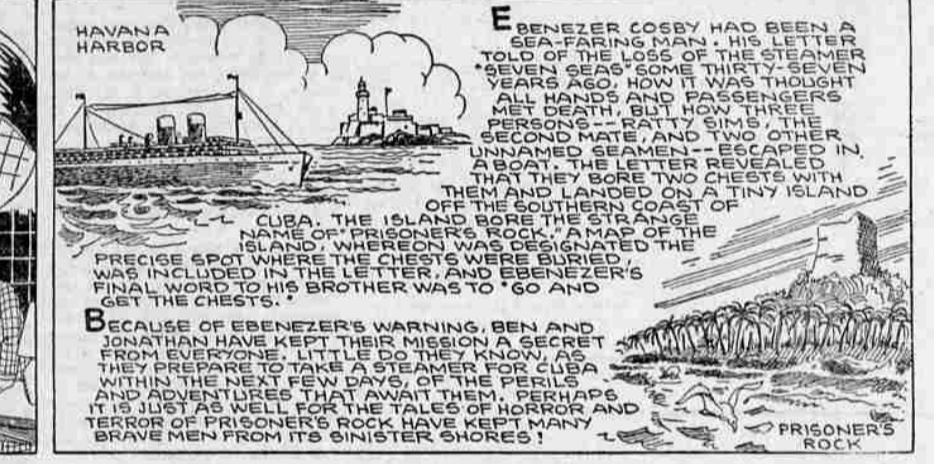
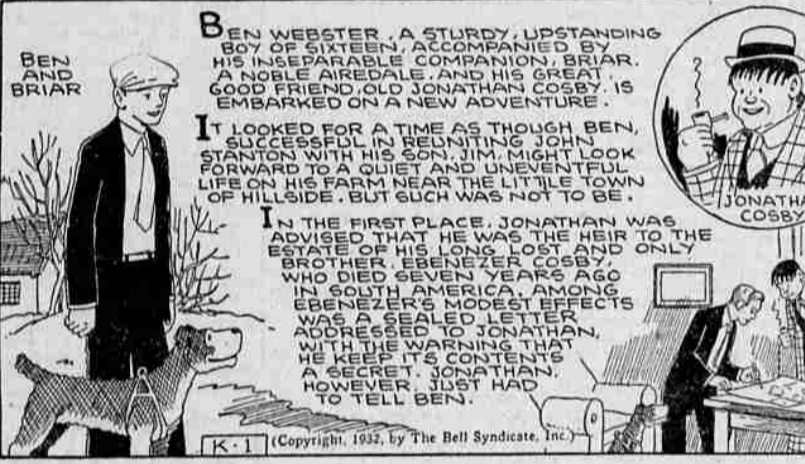
TAILSPIN TOMMY—Skeeter Wants To Settle The Score!



S'MATTER POP—Hiss! He Never Gives In!



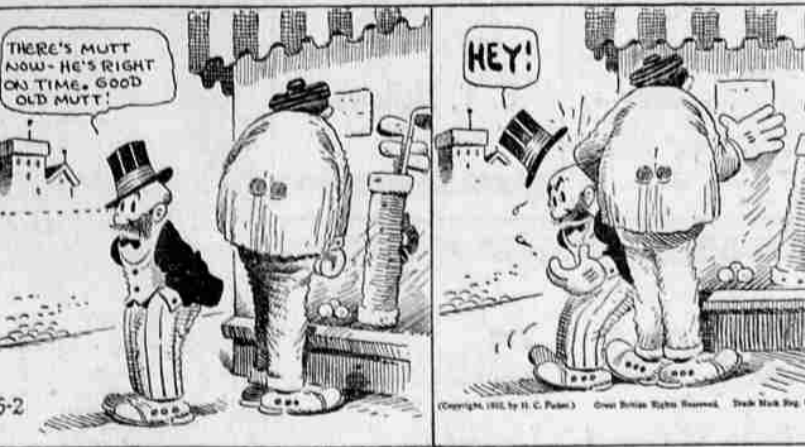
BOUND TO WIN—Now Then, Go On With The Story



THE NEBBS—Everything Will Be All Right



MUTT AND JEFF—The Uncrowned Champ



By BUD FISHER

YALE PROFESSOR REIMBURSE BAKER VOICES DISGUST FOR LOST SALARY

BERKELEY, Cal., May 2. — (AP) — The American college is a gilded log, on one end of which sits a drowsy undergraduate and on the other end a "fairly well paid bore," Percy Marks, Yale English professor, said today in the University of California Alumni Monthly.

MARKS, author of the "Plastic Age," novel of college student life, complains that undergraduates are not students, professors are not teachers, and college buildings are realizations of dreams of administrators whose interest has strayed from the student.

Elect. Frank Peri coroner.

BRINGING UP FATHER



By George McManus